SOME UNPUBLISHED LETTERS OF HORACE WALPOLE. EDITED BY SIR SPENCER WALPOLE

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Henry Cabot Lodge

TIFFANY & CO.

SOME UNPUBLISHED LETTERS
OF
HORACE WALPOLE

Yrs most sincerely
Hor Walpole

Walter L. Colls, Sc.

SOME UNPUBLISHED LETTERS OF HORACE WALPOLE

Edited by Sir Spencer Walpole

WITH TWO PHOTOGRAVURE PORTRAITS

LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.,
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NOTE

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ILLUSTRATIONS

HORACE WALPOLE, EARL OF ORFORD . *Frontispiece*

From a pencil drawing by Sir Thomas Lawrence

MADAME LA MARQUISE DU DEFFAND . *To face p.* 16

From a print in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris

SOME UNPUBLISHED LETTERS

OF

HORACE WALPOLE

The Hon. Thomas Walpole—to whom most of these letters were addressed—was the second son of the first Lord Walpole of Wolterton, and, therefore, the nephew of Sir Robert, and the cousin of Horace, Walpole. His name will be familiar to some people as the owner of Hayes in Kent, the place to which Lord Chatham desired to repair in his distressing illness; and which Mr. Walpole, to satisfy the wishes of the minister, generously gave up to him. If, on this account, he has earned a short notice in history for his self-denying consideration for a suffering statesman, he is remembered in his family for misfortunes of peculiar severity. For, in 1772, Mr. Walpole, who was, at that time, a wealthy

London merchant, was the principal agent in assisting the Bank of England to mitigate the intensity of an acute commercial crisis. Fears were expressed that the great house of Alexander in Edinburgh would fail; and its possible failure was viewed with as much alarm as the failure of the Barings was anticipated in our own time. Mr. Walpole had accepted bills, amply secured by mortgages on real property in the West Indies and on other securities, drawn by the Alexanders for 93,000*l.* These acceptances were in the hands of the Bank of England, and the Bank, alarmed at 'the extent and precariousness of their engagements,' resolved to contract their discounts. The House of Alexander would undoubtedly have fallen if the Bank had not been persuaded to continue to discount its paper, on Mr. Walpole making himself responsible for its future drawings to a limited amount, and giving up to the Bank the securities which he held on the West India estates of the Alexanders. Unfortunately the latter, who had undertaken, *inter alia*, to consign the produce of their West India estates to

Mr. Walpole, omitted to do so from 1774; and Mr. Walpole was compelled, with the concurrence of the Bank, and on the advice of its counsel, to make the Alexanders bankrupts and 'prosecute' the possession of the mortgaged estates. The suit, which was instituted in the Court of Chancery in Granada, was protracted till 1779, when the Governor, Lord Macartney, who was also Chancellor of the island, at last fixed a day for pronouncing his decree. Before judgment was delivered, however, the island, by a rare stroke of illfortune, was captured by the French; and Lord Macartney, perhaps a little ashamed of delays partly of his own making, signed a declaration of his intended decree, which was entirely in Mr. Walpole's favour.

Lord Macartney's declaration had, of course, no legal validity. The French Government, on acquiring the island, issued an order forbidding all debtors from making any payment to their English creditors, and Messrs. Alexander, who in the meanwhile had fled to France to avoid the laws of this country, endeavoured, under the terms

of the order, 'to secure to themselves their estates.' Mr. Walpole had, in consequence, to prosecute his own claim in the French Courts; he remained in Paris while the proceedings were being conducted, and he had ultimately the satisfaction of obtaining judgment in his favour, and of handing over the estates which he had recovered to the Bank of England in discharge of his obligations to them. In these protracted proceedings, however, Mr. Walpole had lost everything except his honour. And he had to appeal to the generosity of the Bank for the chance of recovering some little pittance from the wreck of his fortune to save his children from want. His appeal, from which many of these facts are taken, was printed at the Strawberry Hill Press in 1781.

After the death of his first wife, a daughter of Sir Joshua Vanneck, Mr. Walpole married in Paris Madame de Villegagnon, the widow of the Comte de Villegagnon. This marriage forms the subject of one of the later letters.

One of Mr. Walpole's children, another Thomas Walpole, is the other member of

the family to whom some of these letters are addressed. In 1783 he was appointed by the Coalition Ministry Minister at the Court of Munich. The Ministry was dismissed before he had proceeded to take up his duties ; and he hesitated whether he ought to do so or not without the authority of their successors. The story goes that, while he was still in doubt, he met Mr. Pitt in St. James's Street, and that Mr. Pitt said to him: 'Why, Walpole, I thought you were at Munich.' Mr. Walpole answered, 'I did not know if I ought to start till I heard from the present Government.' 'I advise you,' was Mr. Pitt's reply, 'to set out this evening.'

Two other anecdotes of this Thomas Walpole—my grandfather—may perhaps be permissible. Like many other members of his family, he was fond of argument ; and his readiness to bring on a dispute by dissenting from any observation is said to have procured him the nickname of 'the dissenting Minister.' He married late in life Lady Margaret Perceval, the sister of the Prime Minister. Some friend said, 'Why, Walpole, what is this I hear? Going to be

married at your age? How old are you?' My grandfather at once replied in the words of Kent to Lear: 'Not so young, sir, to love a woman for singing, nor so old to dote on her for anything. I have years on my back forty-eight.'

Mr. Walpole, so far as his slender means enabled him, pursued the tastes of his cousin, Horace Walpole. The excellent library which he left, some of the books thickly annotated by himself, and the many choice engravings which he collected are a proof of his taste and his culture. He also imitated the example of other members of his family by employing his leisure at Munich in the compilation of a History of Bavaria, which he never published. The affection with which Horace Walpole regarded him will be seen from these letters. One of the books, which I value most, is a Virgil which he gave to my grandfather in 1772, which my grandfather gave to my father on his going to Cambridge, and which my father subsequently gave to me.

This short introductory note will perhaps explain who the persons were to whom

these letters were addressed, and why the elder of them was in Paris at a time when England and France were at war; and why the younger of them was at Munich ten years afterwards.

In editing these letters, I have preserved Horace Walpole's spelling and have merely added a few notes to make the references in the text intelligible.

S. Walpole.

January 1902.

LETTERS

No. 1.

Arlington Street: July 18, 1766.

Dear Sir,—I am extremely obliged to you for the testimony you have born [*sic*] in my favour, and much flattered by the sight of Mr. Pitt's letter, which is too valuable not to restore to you. You shall not be ashamed of having been my surety, for what little assistance I can give Mr. Pitt, especially by my connections, he may depend upon; and he may as much depend upon it, that I have nothing to ask, nor shall ever trouble him with a sollicitation [*sic*]. To see an upright, reputable and lasting Administration is all my wish. I was born in politics, but do not design to die in them. The return of L[ord] T[emple] will greatly facilitate everything: and I hope Mr. Pitt's recovery which

is so essential to his country.[1] I again thank you, Dear Sir, and am your faithful humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

No. 2.

Arlington Street: Nov. 4, 1767.

Dear Sir,—I am exceedingly obliged to you for the sight of such curious papers. I heard the transaction last night from Mr. C[onway] to whom Lord C[amden] [2] had told it with great concern for you, and from the part he had been forced to take in it. What can I say of a man who was born to astonish the world from the greatest things to the least? What sort of madness is it? real? or affected? No matter. I heartily

[1] In July 1766 Mr. Pitt was entrusted with the task of forming a new Ministry and at once proposed to place his brother-in-law, Lord Temple, at the head of the Treasury. Lord Temple, however, ultimately refused his co-operation.

[2] This refers to the circumstances, already alluded to in the Preface, attending the sale of Hayes to Lord Chatham. Lord Camden wrote to Lady Chatham on the occasion, 'I have never been more affected with any scene I have ever been witness to, and am most sensibly touched with Mr. Walpole's singular benevolence and good nature.' See Jesse's *Memoirs of George III.* vol. i. p. 398.

pity you, yet do not see how so good-natured a man cou'd act otherwise, for you are not a Grenville.

Well, Sir, but we shall want this strange man, and may his singularity be as usefull as it has been. You judge very right about Portugal. Oh ! no, it is not over—there are more storms too, I think, than one gathering abroad.

Mr. Conway has at last obtained the King's and the Duke of Grafton's consent to his not taking any part of the profits of Secretary of State.[1] He is in debt, and may ruin himself: and yet I own I could not bring myself to dissuade him from this step.

Lord Orford, I hear, has compromised Ashburton. Palk is to come in for this Session: and Sullivan and Charles Boone next Parliament. The latter is well off. I do not know what he [Lord Orford] means to do with Castle Rising. By what I hear of his circumstances, the best thing he can do will be to sell it: but he seldom does the best

[1] In 1767 General Conway, who had long been uneasy, resigned his office as Secretary of State but, at the King's earnest request, consented to remain in the Cabinet. See Lord Stanhope's *History*, vol. v. p. 185.

thing, even for himself, which is the only excuse I know for the rest of his behaviour. The lawyers think he gets ten thousand pounds for himself by Harris' death, and he demands it in ready money directly—but I do not believe he gets it, except for his life.[1]

I heartily wish Lord Walpole may open his eyes on the behaviour of his false friends. I do not think the parts of the Opposition at all united. I will take great care of the paper for you, and am, Dear Sir, Your most obliged humble Servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

No. 3.

Arlington Street: Oct. 26, 1778.

Dear Sir,—On coming to town to-day I found a most magnificent and beautifull[2]

[1] Thomas Walpole (Horace's correspondent) and John Harris were returned for Ashburton in the General Election of 1761. On the death of Harris in 1767 Robert Palk was returned, and, I assume, must have paid Lord Orford 10,000*l.* for the Seat. Charles Boone and Lawrence Sullivan were, as Horace Walpole anticipated, elected for the Borough at the General Election of 1768. Charles Boone had previously sat for Castle Rising.

[2] I assume that the book was the 'Splendid Book of Shells' to which Horace Walpole alludes in his letter of June 26, 1792; *vide infra.*

book, and a letter as generous and beautifull. I am ashamed to accept the one, and cannot pretend to answer the other, and when I cannot contend with you in generosity, I am sure I will not in words. Still, I am sorry to deprive you of so fine and rare a book, nor can possess it without regret at your expense. All I can do is to give you a thousand thanks; and I owe you still more for your son's visit, which gave me the greatest pleasure. He is so sensible modest and natural that I wish Strawberry Hill cou'd have more attractions for him. I shall be in town till Thursday, if you shou'd come this way. I wou'd call on you rather but must wait here for people of business, being come on the purchase of a House:[1] but I long to thank you in person for all your favours to

Yrs most sincerely,

Hor. Walpole.

To the Honble. Thomas Walpole in
Lincoln's Inn Fields.

[1] Horace Walpole bought 40 (now 16) Berkeley Square in 1779.

No. 4.

Strawberry Hill: June 30, 1780.

Dear Sir,—You had better make haste to Paris, or you will have a ship to freight with Commissions. Here are a parcel more that I have this moment received from Madame du Deffand for you—not for yourself, but your friends. Madame de Mirepoix [1] wants two pounds of tea; Madame de Beauvau *trois serrures.* I suppose you know what sort of locks, I don't: and Monsieur de Caraman wants three serrures also. I must send Mad. du Deffand some tea and some Stoughton's drops; and I have some tea that the Dss. of Leinster gave me for Mad. de Cambis, which she begs you wou'd carry: and Ld Harcourt a small deal box with a Wedgwood vase. I will swear that you are just coming that you may not be more loaded. I believe I shall be in town on Wednesday or Thursday for a night, but had rather see you and your

[1] Horace Walpole had met Madame de Mirepoix on his first visit to Paris. He gives a rather unpleasing account of her in a letter to Gray.

son here whenever you have nothing better to do.

Yrs most sincerely,

Hor. Walpole.

To the Honble. Thomas Walpole in
Lincoln's Inn Fields, London.

No. 5.

Strawberry Hill: July 15, 1780.

Dear Sir,—I troubled you with a few lines at the end of last month, to beg to know when you shou'd set out, and to mention two or three little Commissions from Madame de Beauvau; and I warned you that there wd be more: I believe they frightened you, and that you wd not answer me for fear of them. Your terror, as often happens, increases my courage. I send you a Staffordshire vase in a box for Rousseau's friend, which Ld Harcourt desired me to beg you to carry; and a pd of tea from the Duchess of Leinster: and a pd of tea, and two bottles of Stoughton's drops for Mad. du Deffand. The Dss. of Leinster has since sent me a

small picture and another pd of tea, but they are here: but I must send them to you before you go—so pray let me know when it is to be, for all these parcels together are not considerable. Seriously, I am much more sollicitous to see you before you go, and trust I shall.

Yrs most sincerely,

H. Walpole.

No. 6.

Strawberry Hill: Sept. 6, 1780.

I cannot but be infinitely obliged to you, my dear Sir, for the very friendly trouble you have given yourself, tho' the subject is so exceedingly afflicting to me. My dear old friend's [Madame du Deffand] last letter shocked me as much as possible; it was a kind of taking leave of me, when I had no notion of her being ill: for, tho' the preceding letter had talked of her being out of order, she has so often written in the same manner after a restless night, that it had given me no sort of apprehension. You now give me some faint hopes, but my

M.r de Carmontelle del. ad vivam. Forshd. sculp.t

Mad.e la Marquise du Deffand.

reason gives me none; for all the symptoms, that you and Wiart [1] mention look very ill; and, if there are any favourable, her great age forbids my trusting to them. It ought to have prepared me better for the blow; but the distance I am at, the impossibility of going to her, or of being of any use, and the anxiety I must remain under till another post, are much more preponderant than the cold reflections that shoud comfort me. I am so uncommonly obliged to her, that if I did not admire and love her for her sake, gratitude for my own woud fill me with regret. My only satisfactions are that she does not suffer and that she is so tranquill. Shoud she be capable of hearing it, when you receive this, I intreat you to tell her—but I do not know how to express how much I love her and how much I feel. You will judge a little by the extreme gratitude I feel to you and my cousin for yr attention to Her. While it is possible, I beseech you to continue it. Nothing is so reasonable, or so true, as what you say, Dear Sir, about her still having Company

[1] M. Wiart was Madame du Deffand's secretary.

and Suppers. They would kill me if the Distemper did not. But, amazing as it is that a whole nation shoud choose to communicate their last moments to a crowd of Indifferent Wretches, or that the latter shoud be such wretches as to like to be spectators, or not to care while they can junket, still this is so universally the custom of the French, that I am sure my dear Friend woud think herself abandoned if she was treated otherwise.

If I indulged my own feelings, I shoud write on this sad subject till the end of my paper. But I must not abuse yr goodness—only pray tell M. Wiart how very kindly I take his attention to me. I can scarce bear to name it, but shoud the worst happen, I beg, my dear Sir, that you will get from M. Wiart all my letters, and keep them till you come. After much intreaty, my dear friend did I believe burn many, but some, I fear, she kept. As they all went by the post, and I know were thoroughly inspected, I shoud care not who saw them—except a bookseller, and thence everybody. My bad French ought to be their security

even against that chance, but you cannot wonder that I do not desire to run even that, especially as a power of exposing me to ridicule woud compensate for the badness of the language.

Your own affairs I hope go on prosperously.[1] Events there have been none since the capture of our fleets. At present I take all the care I can to hear nothing, for I am sure the first thing woud be about Elections,[2] a subject I abhor. I am much more concerned for the poor post-horses than for the candidates, for the former cannot help being sold. They say there are, or are to be, some new Peers, but it is indifferent to me who goes out of one stable into another. Geary and Barrington, they say, have both struck their flags.[3]

I wrote this on receiving your letter, but as it cou'd not be in time for the post, I

[1] Mr. Walpole's lawsuit in the French Courts.

[2] Parliament was dissolved on September 1, 1780.

[3] Horace Walpole says in his last journals, vol. ii. p. 426, 'Admiral Geary resigned the command of the fleet. The command was offered to Lord Barrington: he said he would take it with full powers—that is, he would not be dependent on Lord Sandwich; or he would serve under any other admiral; neither being granted he struck his flag.'

must reserve it to Friday, before which it is possible that I may have another letter from M. Wiart. I shall tremble to open it, but will not finish this till it must go to town.

Thursday Night.

I must send this to town to-morrow morning, though I have had no more letters. I don't know that I cou'd but my impatience and uneasiness increase every hour. Wou'd it be impossible to give James' powder ?[1] if it were but five or six grains ? I left some with her, and I conclude you have some. I wou'd give the universe to have her try it. I earnestly beg you to recommend it.

P.S.—The new Peers are Fitzroy, Ld. Gage, Ld. Ch. J. De Grey & Sir W. Bagot.[2]

[1] James' Powder was the fashionable remedy of the day. It may be remembered when Sergt. Atkinson gave Amelia a cordial (Bk. viii. ch. 9) Fielding says : 'What this cordial was, we shall inform the reader in due time. In the meanwhile . . . the gentlemen at White's may lay wagers whether it was Ward's pill or Dr. James' powder.'

[2] Fitzroy was made Lord Southampton ; Chief Justice de Grey, Lord Walsingham ; Sir W. Bagot, Lord Bagot in 1780. Lord Gage's promotion to the Peerage of Great Britain was deferred till 1790.

No. 7.

Berkeley Square: Sept. 19, 1780.

The note I have this moment received from Wiart of the 10th increases my alarms, which his three last bulletins had almost quieted. He says it is the 20th day, & the fever not gone. Indeed her not dictating one word herself has to me a still worse aspect. Your silence too has the same. I shall dread every post. I know how much her great age & weakness are against her. Yet I shoud hope, if she had taken James' powder; tho' I did not press it so much as I wished to do, because I am at a distance & cannot be a perfect judge. All I can say is to give you & your son a million thanks for your extreme attention to her. Tho' I must not impute it all to myself, I take it as kindly as if you cou'd have no other motive.

You know, you must know, how occupied all the world here is with Elections; & you may judge how singular I am who do not care a straw about them. The Court seems likely to be no gainer by the Dissolution;

& it [is] said will lose, particularly in the County Elections. Burke has given up Bristol : Sawbridge was rejected in London : but Kirkman being dead a few hours before the poll closed, there will be much squabbling about it. The authority employed to depose Keppel at Windsor, has been returned with interest. Suffolk and Surrey offered to chuse him. He preferred the latter, & will throw out Lord Onslow's son, who has been jockied at Guilford by his Cousin the Colonel. Charles Fox is likely to succeed at Westminster.[1] The seven new Peers are Earl Talbot (for Rice's son), Ld Gage, Sir W. De Grey, Sir W. Bagot, Fitzroy, old James Brudenel, & Mr. Herbert of High Clear.[2] I believe there is nothing else new, if there is, I (? don't) know it now. Yr nephew, I

[1] Mr. Burke retired from Bristol in 1780, and was elected in the following year for York. Sawbridge, though beaten in September, was returned for London in November, after Mr. Kirkman's death. Admiral Keppel was duly returned for Surrey. Charles Fox was of course successful at Westminster.

[2] Lord Talbot was made Lord Dynevor with remainder to his daughter Lady Cecil Rice. For Lord Gage and three of the other Peers see *ante*, p. 20, note. Herbert was made Lord Porchester in 1780.

see, is chosen at Wigan, & you & yr Brother as usual,[1] and Mackreth—as if one of the family—& so he is, I believe, as much as he that chuses him.[2] Adieu! My dear S'ˢ, I am most anxious, but with little hope. Thank God she does not suffer. Tell her I have written to you, if she is capable of knowing it.

P.S.—I am forced to direct this to you at Mad. du D's, for I left your direction at Strawb[erry Hill] & forgot it.

À Monsieur

Monsieur Thomas Walpole
chez Madame la Marquise du Deffand.

par Ostende à Paris.

No. 8.

Strawberry Hill: Sept. 28, 1780.

I did fear, & for the last ten days did expect the unhappy event for which you bid me now prepare, dear Sir. I own it afflicts me more than I thought it wou'd,

[1] Horatio Walpole, the son of Lord Walpole of Wolterton, was elected for Wigan. Thomas Walpole was member for King's Lynn; his brother, Richard, for Great Yarmouth.

[2] Mr. R. Mackreth was elected for Castle Rising, where Lord Orford had influence. The allusion, I believe, is not to Mr. Mackreth's paternity, but to the conduct of Lord Orford's mother.

considering her great age, & the constant dread I have lived in for some time of her growing deaf. The cruel obstinacy of Bouvart augments my concern. It is very possible that James' powder wou'd not have saved her; but what absurd reason to say it wou'd kill her by vomiting—when he has not the smallest hope, & gives her nothing. What does he but say that *he* will prescribe the precise mode in which she shall die? Nothing could have given me a more happy transport than to have prolonged her life, if but for six months. Can I help suspecting that he thinks that she will be longer dying, & that he shall have a few more fees? How I abhor all Professions!

Her silence & *assoupissement* make me hope she is almost insensible. Indeed I dreaded her dictating some letter to me which I cou'd not stand. I loved her most affectionately & sincerely, & my gratitude to her is without bounds. I admired her, too, infinitely; her understanding, I am sure, till within these three months was astonishing. I received one instance of her affection that I never can

forget while I have a grain of memory left, & which I have never had an opportunity of telling her how deeply I felt. But I am sure, when you hear it, you will think it justifies all the sorrow I feel for losing her—for alas! by this time I doubt I have lost her. If she still exists, and you can show her any mark of kindness, it will be the highest obligation to me. I feel thoroughly all you have done.

Yesterday I received another shock. General Conway [1] has had a fall, I know not how, & broken his arm. Lady Ailesbury assures me he is in no danger, & has even no fever, but I shall go to him myself to-morrow after the post is come. I tremble for letters from Paris, yet must wait for them!

We have little news. The papers say that General Dalrymple is arrived with bad accounts from New York [2]—it is probable for nothing is told. But I credit little on

[1] General Conway was, of course, Horace Walpole's cousin, correspondent, and friend. He married Caroline Dowager Countess of Ailesbury.

[2] General Dalrymple arrived from Sir H. Clinton with an account of the capture of the greatest part of the fleet going to Quebec with supplies. See the *Last Journals of Horace Walpole*, vol. iii. No. 427.

any side for some time. From Glasgow we are told of revolts in five Spanish-American Provinces, but it is from *Glasgow*, whence I am still longer before I believe. Can any truth come out of Nazareth?

Charles Fox is returned for Westminster, but Ld. Lincoln has demanded a scrutiny. Robert Ongley & Lascelles have been forced to give up Bedfordshire & Yorkshire.[1] To-day ends the Election for Surrey. I am going to Ditton this evening; & if I learn the event will add it, as this does not go to London till to-morrow.

I am truly sorry your Business[2] moves so slowly. I was in hopes M. Necker's good sense would have been able to do Justice justice, & give rapidity to her motions, tho' he cannot take off her bandage.

I beg you, Dear Sir, to thank Wiart for his attentions to me. I thank him ten thousand times for those he pays to his dear Mistress. Oh! if it were not too late to give her James' Powder.

[1] Mr. Ongley was succeeded in the representation of Bedfordshire by Mr. St. John; Mr. Lascelles in that of Yorkshire by Mr. Duncombe.

[2] Mr. Walpole's lawsuit.

P.S.—As I went thro' Kingston, I saw the Union Flag displayed at an inn, and the windows illuminated, so I knew the Admiral,[1] had succeeded. He had a majority of 700, on which Onslow gave out. As I came home, I saw at a distance a great bonfire. That must be at Hampton Court or Hampton, and I hear there are to be illuminations at Windsor, when the account arrives there.[2] What happened there is to be a capital episode, they say, when the Parliament meets. Adieu.

Yrs most sincerely,

H. W.

À Monsieur

Monsieur Thomas Walpole,
chez Messrs. Girardot, Haller and Co.

Par Ostende Paris

No. 9.

Strawberry Hill: Oct. 8, 1780.

I did not receive your letter with the fatal news, dear Sir, till yesterday morning with two from Wiart, at the same time,

[1] Keppel.

[2] See *ante*, p. 22, note. The influence of the Court was supposed to have necessitated Keppel's retirement from Windsor, which he had represented in the Parliament of 1774.

so that I had remained twelve days in the most cruel suspense!

Complain I must not: I had been happy in her living longer than cou'd be expected; & my dread of her becoming deaf had constantly mixed anxiety with the satisfaction of preserving her. With these reflections I endeavour to console myself: & yet, & tho' prepared as I was by your foresight, I was greatly shocked at the sight of Wiart's black wax, & the melancholy contents. Bouvart's refusal of James' Powder, I own, has much contributed to the impression, & I cannot forgive it, tho' most probably it would not have saved her. But it is not fair to weary you with my regrets.

Wiart promises me to deliver my letters [1] to you, & a number of the *Voiage* [*sic*] *Pittoresque*. It is the last thing I shall receive thence. I have great regard for some persons at Paris, but I have done with France. It was for my dearest friend alone that I kept up any connection there.

In the midst of all my anxiety for her, I received another terrible alarm. General

[1] I.e. his letters to Madame du Deffand.

Conway broke his left arm just below the shoulder by a fall on one of his own steep hills.[1] I went to him immediately, & shall go again to-morrow: but he is in the fairest way possible, & has not the least symptom of fever.

I know nothing but what I see in the papers, that Lawrence,[2] President of the Congress, has been taken going to Holland, brought over, & committed to the Tower. By the last cargo of news from New York I should think his papers are taken a little too late.

The elections, they say, have turned out less favourable for the Court than was expected: but I know scarce any particulars. The new Parliament is to meet only to be sworn, but will not sit till about the 15th of next month. I wish it may bring you, and consequently your son too, back.

You will excuse my brevity just now;

[1] General Conway lived at Park Place, near Henley.

[2] Henry Laurens, who had been President of the Congress, and who was proceeding on a mission to the Hague, was taken by Captain Keppel and committed to the Tower (see Stanhope's *History of England*, vol. vii. p. 80). He was released in 1781.

You see, as you might conclude, that I know nothing; & my mind, if I indulged my pen, is so full of my poor lost friend that I shou'd talk of nothing else. If, before your return, you shd happen to see the Prince of Bauffremont, I shou'd be obliged if you wd ask him in what way he wishes a Chevalier de St. Sauveur, whom he has recommended to me, shou'd be served. I have told both the Prince and him that I have no kind of interest or credit, & can only direct the latter where to apply. He is a Protestant, & yet it seems odd for a Frenchman to desire to come into our service at present. I know nothing of his History. Perhaps he has had a duel. The Prince recommended him too to my Lord Courtney—not a much better channel! & he is gone into Devonshire to learn English, which he must learn again when he has learnt Devonshire. I don't know what to do with him, and yet I received so many civilities in France, I will not neglect him. And besides the Prince was a friend of my poor dear Friend, and I woud do anything on earth to show

my regard for & remembrance of Her! You see I am returning again to that chapter.

Yrs most sincerely,

H. W.

A Monsieur

Monsieur Thomas Walpole,
Chez Mess. Girardot, Haller & Co.

A Paris.

No. 10.

Strawberry Hill: Oct. 26, 1780.

I had heard of my dear Friend's legacy, dear Sir. Madame de Cambis had wrote word of it to the D[uke] of R[ichmond]. Indeed even that notice was no novelty. Several years ago my dear old friend told me she shou'd leave me her Porcelaine *& other things*. I assured her if she did not promise me in the most solemn manner *not* to do any such thing, I wou'd never set my foot in France again, for that, considering her age, I shou'd be thought to have paid court to her with that view: and I protested that, if she left me anything of value, I wou'd immediately give up all to her family, & then perhaps what she left would not be distributed, just in the manner

she wou'd have wished. After some contest, & various requests from her to name what I wou'd accept, as her books &c., all which I positively refused, she said, wou'd I, at least, take her papers? To satisfy her, as there wou'd be nothing mercenary in that acceptance, I did consent. This was during the life of Monsieur de Pont de Veille, who was to have been her executor. The last time I was at Paris, she pressed me to chuse and then take some of her porcelaine. I refused. She persisted. At last, to pacify her, I took one of the cheapest cups and saucers, & pretended I preferred it because it had *Strawberries* on it, & it is now in this room. I believe Monsieur Wiart must remember that transaction, & probably all the rest I have been telling you. I am not sure, but I think I recollect her desiring me to accept the box with her Dog's picture; and, as it is, I believe, a trifle, I shall not decline it.

The papers, as there are many of her own writing, will be infinitely dear to me I know them all well. There are letters & characters & portraits &c., & her corre-

spondence with Voltaire, & a volume or two of miscellaneous verses, & much of the Chev. de Boufflers. They will all be in very safe hands. I not only revere Mad. du Deffand's memory, but her friends may be assured that *She* shall not be blamed for having bequeathed them to an Englishman. I will show that I deserved her confidence, & that I am not unworthy of the civilities I received in France. I mean that, tho' her papers are & cou'd be only trifles of Society, they will remain as secret as if they were of the highest importance. It will be a melancholy pleasure in my solitude to read what I have often perused with her in her room. But I shall not communicate what indeed few here would understand. In one word, I can have no greater satisfaction than in paying every positive or negative mark of respect to her dear memory. I beg your pardon for troubling you with this detail, but it was necessary; and I must entreat you, Dear Sir, to repeat as much of it, or all, as may be necessary to Madame du Deffand's friends, in particular to the Prince de Beauvau,

to whom I beg you will make my compliments, & tell them that, tho' I value most exceedingly the Chev. de Boufflers' letters, yet, if there are any which the Prince may wish not to be sent to me, I consent to his retaining them. It is an attention, which I should wish to receive, & therefore ought to pay. Mad. du Deffand always expressed the utmost gratitude for the Prince's unaltered friendship, & I think I do not violate her last wish by paying that compliment to her Friend. I shall beg you to receive whatever he delivers to you. I will write to Mon^sr. D'Aulan,[1] the nephew, on Tuesday: but it is impossible to-night, so I beg you will tell him: & then I will authorise him to trust you with everything which I shall beg you to keep till you come.

I have scarce anything to tell you, for I have not been in town this month; & here I see none but old women. The Parliament is to meet on Tuesday, and go on business as soon as the Members are

[1] Monsieur le Marquis d'Aulan was Madame du Deffand's nephew and heir.

sworn. I have heard that the Opposition intend to propose Sir Fl. Norton for Speaker (for Fred Montagu's health will not let him undertake it) & that the Court will set up someone else whom I do not know. Lord Cornwallis' victory revived our martial ardour at first, but it rather seems to cool again.[1] Last week the Stocks imagined peace with Spain was near; but that seems blown over too. However, I only talk from newspapers & their echos. Lord Carlisle[2] & Eden certainly go to Ireland. Sir John Mordaunt is dead, as I heard this evening. General Conway, I hope, is out of bed by this time: he has not had the least fever. Lord Macartney[3] has carried his point of going to India. Lord Bute & Mackinsy[4] are both out of Parliament.

This is the sum total of my knowledge;

[1] Lord Cornwallis defeated General Gates at Camden on August 16, 1780. Within a year of the date of this letter he surrendered at Yorktown.

[2] Lord Carlisle was made Viceroy of Ireland in December 1780.

[3] As Governor of Madras; *vide infra*, p. 40.

[4] I presume Mr. James Stuart Mackenzie, Lord Bute's brother, who sat for Ross-shire in the Parliament of 1774, and who retired in 1780.

for, in truth, I do not go a step out of my way to inquire after news & seldom have any till it has been in print. I wrote a long letter to Wiart with some questions about my dear old friend, which, I hope, he received & will answer. He told me she had acted kindly by him. I knew her intentions on that head and towards all her Servants. When you return, which I shou'd hope wd be soon & with satisfaction, you must allow me to talk a little about her, which I will not do now, tho' I can scarce refrain. I hope not a line of hers will be detained from me, especially the written portraits. She had many most entertaining letters from the Abbé Barthelemi, of which I was very fond too. I repeat how carefull I shall be of everything. As I outlive my friends, my greatest pleasure is thinking & talking of them. What is past is much more dear to me than anything that is passing now. And, begging the present Time's pardon, I do not think I am much in the wrong! Your son is one of the very few that cou'd replace any of those that I loved & are gone: but I shall not make him so bad a compliment

as to offer him the friendship of a superannuated man.

À Monsieur.
Monsieur Thomas Walpole,
Chez Messrs. Girardot & Co.
Par Ostende. à Paris.

No. 11.

Berkeley Square: Nov. 29, 1780.

I was most agreeably surprised the other day, Dear Sir, by a visit from your son, whom I little expected. He tells me you will be here too at the beginning of the year; but I fear his arrival is no omen of your coming soon. I have since received yours of the 12th, with one enclosed from the Prince of Beauvau, with which I am not at all pleased. There are mighty fine compliments, but those are not what I want. He says 'if there are any portraits or characters qui paroissent compromettre quelqu'un, et qui pourraient par conséquence blesser la mémoire de notre amie, he shall les mettre à part.' *That* I by no means consent to. I told him I desired to have every scrap of

her writing or dictating, &, when I so readily relinquished all letters of living persons, he might be sure that I shou'd show nothing that woud hurt anybody, & am as little likely to occasion any reflexion on my dear friend for having left them to me. I beg you will mention this civilly to the Prince, and that I shou'd be hurt at having it supposed, with my extreme regard for Mad. du Deffand, that I shou'd let any such thing appear. I do not care to write to him myself as I shou'd conceal but ill how much such a paragraph wounds me. I pique myself on my tenderness for her, & the Prince affects to act it for me, & sends back my own words as a sop to quiet me. I have seen the portraits & characters over & over [again]; and, as she chose I shou'd have them, I shall never give my consent to relinquishing them; & they are certainly less liable to be seen in England, where they excite no curiosity, than in France. He says too she gave him leave to have copies of what he pleased. In that case, I may bid adieu to your bringing them over! You may guess what I

think of all this! My idea of wills is perhaps particular—Indeed I have seen by other instances that it is so.

I received from Wiart one of the most touching & sensible letters I ever saw, indeed the most simply eloquent; it shows how he had imbibed his dear Mistress' natural style. But he mistook me in one point, & thence occasioned your doing, dear Sir, what I by no means meant. In his first letter, he made many humble apologies for writing to me. I told him that I was very far from having any such foolish pride, & that his attachment to his mistress levelled all distinction: that I shoud be always glad to hear from him & of his welfare, & that he needed not make any secret of my writing to him. He understood this, as a desire in me that he shou'd show my letter, as a proof of my grief, which was not at all my meaning, & I suppose it will be thought ostentation, which I despise. I had infinite reason to love my dearest old friend; I wou'd do anything to show regard and respect to her memory; but I have lived too long, and

am too near going myself, to value vainglory. And, as the late Duke of Cumberland said wisely, when he became unpopular, 'I recollected in the height of my popularity that Admiral Vernon had been popular too.'[1]

I told you, on misinformation at Richmond, that Lord Macartney had got the Government of Madras.[2] The election is not over yet.

I cannot tell you a syllable more than you see in the public papers. We are thanking, or accusing, or abusing with our usual judgment. I say, as was the way formerly, the Accused should cry: 'I appeal to a General Council.'[3]

[1] Admiral Vernon had, as a Member of Parliament, denounced Sir R. Walpole's pacific policy. Appointed at the outbreak of war to the command of the West Indian Squadron, he had taken Porto Bello, and became in consequence the most popular man in England. He failed in the following year in an attack on Carthagena. See Stanhope's *History of England*, vol. iii. 57 *seq.*

[2] Lord Macartney was made Governor of Madras, where he arrived in 1781.

[3] Warm debates had taken place in the Commons on Motions to give the thanks of the House to Sir Fletcher Norton, the late Speaker, and to General Lord Cornwallis. Both Lord Cornwallis and Sir Fletcher Norton were vehemently attacked (accused or abused) in the debates.—*Last Journals of Horace Walpole*, vol. ii. pp. 493, 494.

I was diverted at the French astonishment at Ld. Pomfret's being of the Bedchamber; in truth he had resigned, but Ld. O.[rford] has not, nor Ld. Bolinbroke: two names that were not formerly worn by lunatics. I proposed last year, but it was too reasonable and too cheap a plan to be adopted, that the few who remain in their senses shou'd be shut up in Bedlam, & all the rest be at liberty. Perhaps it was not accepted because the Majority do not like liberty. Accordingly they are now humoured & sent to the Tower, instead of to Moorfields.[1] Adieu!

À Monsieur,
Monsieur Thomas Walpole
Chez Messrs. Girardot & Co.
Par Ostende. Paris.

No. 12.

Dec. 29, 1780.

I am ashamed & sick, dear Sir, of the chicaneries I meet with about my poor

[1] 'Lord Pomfret, half a madman, was committed to the Tower by the House of Lords, for challenging and grossly insulting the Duke of Grafton.'—*Last Journals of Horace Walpole*, vol. ii. p. 430.

friend's papers, tho' I never expect to get any worth a straw. Since I wrote to you last, I received a mighty zealous letter from the Pr[ince] vaunting on his having insisted on having for me the MSS. books, which the Executor wd. have withheld. I took that opportunity of writing to him a mighty gratefull letter, which I showed to yr Son, in hopes of peaking his generosity, à la bonne heure! He now, *he* who was so afraid of the Characters being printed, desires me to print such as he shall mark to me, to save him the trouble of having them copied! In that letter too he proposed to me to give the correspondence with Voltaire to be printed with the latter's works; adding that, as far as he had gone, he found they wd do her honour. To that I consented. Now again, in the letter you enclosed from him, he says he finds very few of Voltaire's original letters! All this is so shuffling, that to save myself and you, dear Sir, any further trouble I will add a note which you will be so good as to translate to him, that I hope will prevent any more messages backwards & forwards.

I forgot another trait. He says, that amongst what is left to me are many Brocheures [*sic*] chiefly things of Voltaire, that are or will be in the New Edition, and which he supposes I shou'd not desire to have. I certainly did desire nothing; but, being thus treated, I cannot be such a fool as to acquiesce blindly, & if I am wronged, it shall not be with my own consent. I will, therefore, beg you very civilly, dear Sir, to make my compliments to the Pr[ince] and tell him that, as he is not well, I do not write myself, not to put him to the trouble of answering it. That, as to printing any of the portraits or characters, I am sure that upon reflection, he will not wish it: for, as it is impossible for me to secure that my printer wd. not reserve a copy or copies for himself, it must risk what the Pr[ince] himself apprehended, their being published; & that nothing cou'd induce me to run a hazard of that kind. That, if the Pr[ince] will mark those of which he desires copies, I can have them transcribed in my own room without any danger. That, as to the letters of Voltaire, my dear friend had his

& her own letters all transcribed into a Folio, which may have occasioned the neglect of the originals; but such a Book there was, & ought to be. That, as to the Brocheures, they will be very valuable to me, as I may not be able to get them in England, & in France they must be common & therefore I shou'd wish to have them.

This, dear Sir, is with the reserve of their not being too bulky to trouble you with, but I had rather you shou'd leave behind you what you do not think worth bringing, than comply with a request that I do not at all admire. I am very sorry you have so much trouble; but I flatter myself you approve me, & do not think that I have insisted on too much: perhaps I have on too little. I received the Snuff box,[1] & it is most precious to me. I own I wish to have the Dog itself, that I may make it as happy as my poor friend did.

[1] I presume this Snuffbox was that which the Maréchale de Luxembourg had given Madame du Deffand. It had Tonton's (the dog's) portrait on it. See Austin Dobson's *Horace Walpole*, p. 250, note, and *ante*, p. 32.

She is, if possible, more dear to me by comparing her with others.

I do not pretend to send you news as yr son is here.

If you see the Duchess de Choiseul, or the Abbé Barthelemi, I will beg you to let them know that I had ordered their letters to be restored *before* they asked for them.

I have barely time to read my letter, & am, dear Sir, infinitely ashamed of and gratefull for the trouble you have for

Yours most affectionat[ly],

H. W.

A Monsieur.
Monsieur Thomas Walpole,
Chez Messrs. Girardot & Co.
Par Ostende. à Paris.

No. 13.

Berkeley Square: March 13, 1781.

Dear Sir,—Your Son has just sent me the Prince of Beauvau's letter to you, but it by no means satisfies me. He talks of sending you *only* two more folios of transcribed letters: but what I want, is, *the Volume of portraits & characters written by my dear*

friend herself, & another of miscellaneous verses, songs, epigrams, etc. The former are what she particularly wished me to have: & I beg you will look whether they are amongst what he has already sent you; and, if not, I beg you will tell him, when you see him, that it is those I am most anxious about. He cannot well deny having them, for they are what he first begged to retain, & then, when I refused, what he desired me to print for him, which I also refused.

I am very sorry you do not mention your own return. I am perfectly easy about whatever is in your hands. For the brocheures & indifferent things you will have an opportunity of sending them. Ld. Lucan set out this morning for Paris to see his son who has the measles there, & wd take charge of them: but, if you shou'd have the portraits &c., I shou'd not venture to trust them to an Irish head.

I have desired Lord Lucan to inquire of Le Duc, the Taylor, whether he has not several suits of Cloaths (I know he has) belonging to the late Mr. Beauclerc, &

which he left to his Servant. Wiart, if anybody, cou'd get them, & wou'd keep them, till the poor man cou'd get them over, which he will soon have an opportunity of doing. Will you permit your own servant to speak to Wiart on that subject? But I do not suppose they will be recovered. When a French will is so ill observed, can you expect that a Taylor, tho' a great Prince too, shou'd respect an English one.

The Park and Tower guns have been firing to-day for the conquest of St. Eustatia.[1] They were almost ready to go off last week for a peace that the Emperor & Czarina were to get for us. But I conclude your Son tells you all our news, & I shou'd only repeat him. I wish very much to see you. I hope you will not stay till the peace is made.

Yr. much obliged & very humble Servt.

HOR. WALPOLE.

À Monsieur.

Monsieur Thomas Walpole.

[1] The Dutch West Indian island of St. Eustatia was captured by Rodney in 1781, with a good deal of treasure. His treatment of the inhabitants led to subsequent discussion in Parliament.

No. 14.

Berkeley Square: March 25, 1781.

Dr. Warner, who is going to Aix to conduct home the Dowager Carlisle, will bring you this, Dear Sir.

I have received a letter from the Duc de Guines [*sic*] recommending to me an Italian Abbé, in which he tells me (and I do not know how he came to do so, as we have had no correspondence) that Mad. d. D. left me only such papers as were specified in an Inventory, and that there remain a great many, not inserted there, & perhaps not the least precious, which he laments not coming to me. I do not know whether this is a fact, or a mistake arising from what the Marquis d'Aulan disputed at first & then gave up; or to sound me by *somebody's* desire or in consequence of having heard anything of the treatment I have received. I have answered very guardedly, told him the heads of my story without complaint, & concluded by saying that, having had no pretensions to anything, I certainly can claim nothing but what was left to me.

I shou'd be much obliged to you, however, if you cou'd indirectly inform yourself whether this relation is well founded. You may, if you please, mention it to the Duc de Guines himself, & say how much I am obliged to him for the information & for the part he takes in what relates to me. This may lead to his telling you more. I certainly do not mean to ask for anything to which I have not the most strict right. I wish I cou'd get that—tho' indeed I have never expected to get a scrap of paper that is worth reading! I have hitherto forborne complaining, because I dread the suspicion of having wished to have anything left to me. But, having gone so far as to make my Dear Old Friend very angry with me by positive refusals of everything, they, who defraud me, will not act very honourably if they deprive me of a parcel of manuscripts.

Tho' I write securely, I can tell you nothing but general topics. The Nation is more besotted, & the Ministers more popular than ever. Were it only that the Opposition is more unpopular, I shou'd not wonder nor think people so much to blame.

The enormous jobs given in the Loan [1] have made a little noise: indeed so much, that the Court has taken pains to spread reports of Invasion to lower the premiums, & have succeeded. Perhaps they believe these reports, for troops are despatched to all the important ports on the Coast, & last night the grand fleet [2] was said to be recalled. It is positively said too that the negotiations of peace are broken off, which I expected, tho' not so soon.

General Conway is gone to Jersey with strong additional force, which he obtained only by dint of perseverance.

If you stay much longer, I believe you will find new Embarras from a new Quarter. The youngest Uncle [the Duke of Cumberland] has got possession of the eldest Nephew [the Prince of Wales], and sets the father [George III.] at defiance. A moppet [3] in

[1] Lord North had funded twenty-one millions to borrow twelve. It was severely handled on the partiality he had showed in disposing of the loan to Members of Parliament and favourites.—*Last Journals of Horace Walpole*, vol. ii. p. 453.

[2] *I.e.* the fleet which sailed in March for the relief of Gibraltar.

[3] It may perhaps be necessary to explain that Johnson defines '|moppet' (perhaps from 'mop') as a puppet made with rags like a mop. The word occurs in Dryden.

Grosvenor Square [Lord Rockingham] has conceived hopes from this rising storm which are about as well founded as any of his pretensions have ever been. This is a slight sketch which you will be able to detail in your own mind, as no material change has happened anywhere.

If Dr. Warner returns from Aix, where he will stay very little, before you set out for England, you may write safely to me by him, & send me any of the papers, if you should receive them, & the Voiage pittoresque de la Grece, & the tomes of the bibliothèque des Romans, both of which Wiart has for me, & for which I will beg you to pay him.

Yrs most Sincerely,

H. W.

No. 15.

April 30, 1781.

I cannot express, dear Sir, how my heart bleeds at what you said in your last.[1] But I will not say anything on that subject now,

[1] This, and the opening sentence in the succeeding letter refer to Mr. Walpole's protracted lawsuit.

as I shall refer myself to your son when you see him. He is indeed one of the most meritorious and amiable young men in the world. I wish the great affection I have for him could be of any value to him!

He delivered me the Voiage Pittoresque, the dear little dog of my poor friend, & a box of papers; but I was surprised at not finding one miscellaneous volume, & more particularly the volume of Portraits & Characters, which I shou'd think might easily have been copied before now. I beg you will make my compliments to the Prince of Beauvau, & acknowledge the rest, but say that I am anxious to have the two others, as it was what my dear friend particularly recommended to me often & often, & that I hope he will have it finished as soon as he can, that I may have it in my possession.

I begged yr Son to mention to you a little volume of the Works of the Chevalier de Boufflers, lately printed, which Madame de Cambis has sent a copy of to the Duke of Richmond. If it is to be bought, I shou'd be glad to have one.

There is nothing at all new here of any

sort. Whatever I hear before he sets out, you shall hear by him.

I am, with far more earnestness than what is said for the conclusion of a letter, & with the sincere friendship that I have long professed for you,

Yrs most Affectly,

Hor. Walpole.

À Monsieur.

Monsieur Thomas Walpole,
à Paris.

No. 16.

May 14, 1781.

It is impossible in a letter, my dear Sir, to tell you the concern I feel for your situation, because compliment has so abused all terms, that none are left appropriated to sincerity. I can only appeal to my character, which is not that of a flatterer, & to that of mankind, who are not apt to flatter the unprosperous. I must not mention my own share, tho' I assure you yr absence adds very considerably to my concern. Yet, were you not so tender a father, you yourself wou'd have little reason to forget this country, which is so degraded that the Amor Patriæ

is little more justifiable than the man who falls in love with a common whore. Your Son deserves every kind of esteem: his courage, his patience, his temper, his reason are beyond description. Had I any prospect of being usefull to him it would give me the greatest satisfaction. But neither the present moment nor the future, shou'd my life be longer than it probably will, offer any views on which an honest man wou'd build. But, while I do live, he will have a sincere friend, & a house to which he will always be most welcome.

I can add nothing to all you know. Ld. Cornwallis' late success over Greene[1] will certainly make us more obstinate against any pacification in favour of America, & Darby's relief of Gibraltar,[2] without the slightest opposition from France or Spain, will confirm *Entêtement* in the opinion of its own wisdom, tho' all it proves is that

[1] On March 15, 1781, Lord Cornwallis defeated General Greene, in a severely contested, and, as it proved, indecisive battle near Guildford Court House.

[2] Admiral Darby threw a welcome relief into Gibraltar in April, 1781. The relief, however, did not terminate the siege, but was, on the contrary, closely followed by the great bombardment.

France & Spain are still more contemptible than England. An Opposition that cou'd muster 134 on Sir George Saville's late Motion for hearing the Delegates shows how strong the Opposition might be had they any union or conduct.[1] But neither is to be expected; &, as folly & chance seem to be the only managers on this side of Europe, it is impossible to guess what will happen: for penetration cannot calculate on such data.

You talked very sensibly on the sensations occasioned by the behaviour of a certain young person [the Prince of Wales] & yet, tho' the Elder [the King] no doubt at first comforted himself with the *favorable* comparison that would be made in preference to Hypocrisy over Debauchery, yet, as Insults are more felt than reflections, I shou'd think provocations wou'd have more effect than the cool deliberations of Envy, and yet Timidity will strengthen the latter.

[1] Sir George Saville had moved on May 8 that petitions from his own constituents and others complaining of the increasing influence of the Crown, and the heavy expenditure of the war, should be referred to a committee. He was defeated by 212 votes to 135 (not 134).—*Parl. Register*, vol. xx. p. 212.

I confess I am angry at the Younger for giving these advantages to the Elder. But what good cou'd come out of Nazareth? Ætas parentum, *pejor avis* tulit nequiores.[1]

16*th*.—La Mothe Picquet's [2] capture of several of the Eustatia ships arrived yesterday noon. In the city it occasioned rage against Ld. Sandwich, who had been applied to for Convoy. But, by night, the word, given out at this end of the town, & which will be ecchoed [*sic*] was that it was a blow that wd fall only on some underwriters. And for convoy, how shd it be sent, our ships not being half manned? In short we desire nothing but to be imposed on, & the worst reasons satisfy. On Monday, on Burke's Motion for inquiry into the transactions at St. Eustatia,[3] the Opposition was treated with the utmost scorn, for impudence is accepted

[1] Ætas parentum, pejor avis, tulit
Nos nequiores.—Horace, *Odes*, iii. 6.

[2] La Mothe Piquet captured twenty-one of the thirty transports which were laden with the plunder of St. Eustatia. 'Great clamour rose amongst the merchants and insurers, who had demanded a large convoy to meet them from Lord Sandwich.'—*Horace Walpole's Last Journals*, vol. ii. p. 460.

[3] Burke brought forward the case of the sufferers at St. Eustatia. Stanhope, *History of England*, vol. vii. p. 131.

by the Nation for Spirit, & unfair War for policy. To be sure unfair war, when we are inferior is Spirit, but then it is not policy.

22*nd*.—My letter, as you see by the date, has been long written, but waited for yr son's departing. He called this morning, when I was abroad, & left word he wd call again after dinner, so I finish it for him.

I have nothing material to add, for any new folly of Ld. Rockingham is certainly not important. In his panic on the riots last June, he went to Gloucester House one morning, when the Duke, from his having done so once before four or five years ago, & from his never having been since nor to the Duchess, wd not see him. On this he has turned Drummer & Trumpeter for the Cumberlands, made all his friends go thither, & has kept Lord John [Cavendish] & Burke entirely from Gloucester House. On Saturday, the Duke of Cumberland gave a great dinner to this Moppet of Chieftain, & to the D. of Portland & others. But, as Lord Rockingham never despairs of being Minister,[1] nor is delicate about the

[1] Lord Rockingham became Prime Minister in 1782.

means, I believe the influence the Duke of Cumberland has over his Nephew is a great ingredient in Ld. Rockingham's views; & he, who shunned Wilkes, will crouch to the Lutterels[1] [*sic*]. But what signifies the views of such a gang of Fools, who have no spirit but what pride & a bottle of hartshorn can infuse into their leader? Somebody knocks, & I must finish. I shall be ever

Most truly & affectly Yrs

H. W.

No. 17.

Berkeley Square: July 31, 1781.

I don't know when you will receive this letter, perhaps not under three weeks; but I cou'd not let slip the opportunity of writing to you, dear Sir, by D^r^ Gem, whom I still found here, & who hopes to set out at the end of this week. I have nothing to tell you, but that I am & always shall be affectionately Yours & Yr Son's—here my letter ought to end, & I hope it was not necessary even to say so much. But I own

[1] The Duchess of Cumberland (Mrs. Horton) was sister of Colonel Luttrell. See for this account of Lord Rockingham and the Duke of Cumberland, *ante*, Letter No. 14.

I am disappointed. I expected to see yr Son before now. Last night I came to town to see & wish joy to our again united families, which is great joy to me too. I asked Ld. Walpole[1] about you both, & he said you cannot part with yr Son which in truth I do not wonder at. His virtues deserve all your affection. I do not desire either of you to write when it is inconvenient or disagreeable to you: but be assured that it will always give me pleasure to hear of you, & more to hear anything that is fortunate to you.

In politics, I know nothing new, nor enquire, nor—had almost said, care, which is natural when both belief and hope are tired out.

Of the Prince of Beauvau I find I am to hear no more. I shou'd blush if I had executed my dear old Friend's will no better than he has! Her poor little dog has all my care. I am happy the Prince did not want the copy of him, for then I should never have seen the original.

My nephew [Lord Orford], who has

[1] Lord Walpole of Wolterton, the brother of Thomas Walpole.

more excuse, for at least *he* has been mad, is much such an Executor, only a little more fairly as more openly, for he contests part of what his mother left to her paramour,[1] tho' he declared he woud not. However, he offers to compromise, & has desired me to be a Referee, & Mozzi has named Mr. Morrice for the other. I accepted on the express condition that I shd be allowed to act as a gentleman, not as a lawyer. This Office has brought to my sight a letter that he wrote to his mother on his first recovery, in which he states the great improvement of his & her Estates, & attributes all to my care.[2] This is a satisfaction I never expected to see under his hand. But I beg yr pardon for troubling you with my personal concerns, & yet I have nothing better to send you, & therefore conclude

Yrs Most Affectionately & Sincerely,

H. Walpole.

[1] Lady Orford, a few weeks after her husband's death, in 1751, married a son of Lord Ferrers, with whom scandal had already connected her name. He died in 1781; and his widow lived not very reputably on the Continent. Austin Dobson, *Memoirs of Horace Walpole*, p. 206.

[2] Horace Walpole managed his nephew, Lord Orford's, property during the latter's confinement as a lunatic.

No. 18.

November 11, 1781.

I have seldom in my life been so delightfully surprised as I was on Wednesday last by a visit from your Son. It is not to reproach yr silence, dear Sir, for I allowed for the numerous reasons that might occasion it. But I own I was very unhappy at it, & feared you did not know how cordially & sincerely I took part in your cares. The Duke of Richmond told me Madame de Cambis had mentioned the decree in your favour; but hearing no more of it, nor being able to learn the truth, I did fear it was not so propitious as your son tells me. I do most heartily congratulate you & your Family, & believe few but they have more real pleasure in yr good fortune. Yr Son speaks modestly of it, as he does of everything: but Mr. Suckling, whom I saw yesterday, was much more sanguine, & made me hope such a re-establishment as I wish. Do not talk of philosophy. You have such very meritorious children, & have so much courage yourself, that I hope you

will again be active, & make them as considerable as they ought & deserve to be. For your son, if my affection is any present, he is very worthy of it. Nothing can be more insipid than my life, but, whenever he will partake of it, he will make me happy, & as often & for as long as he pleases, tho' a lame old man is poor company.

You are sensible I can tell you nothing but what everyone knows; nor is it pleasant to write that, if one speaks truth. Nor is France the spot to which I would send what I think.

I have received all the papers of my old friend, that I ever shall receive. I will tire you no more on that subject, tho' I hear you have not more reason to be pleased than I am, with certain persons.

As I hear you see Madame de Guerchy sometimes, I beg my sincere respects to her, & to the Duchesse de la Valière du Carousel, if her you shd see too. Those two ladies have always been equally & constantly good to me. There is another, whom I will not name, who, I own, has surprised me.[1]

[1] I presume the Duchesse de Choiseul; see *post*, Letter 21.

But I will remember the kindness, and forget the neglect.

Your niece, Mrs. Walpole, is breeding.[1] There was a time when I should have thought that a felicity!

Sir Edward [Walpole] has bought a house at Isleworth, has been there three months, nay has been there twice, & made a few other visits. He is amazingly well, & better for the air; nay, it gave him a little gout in his foot for two or three days.

Tonton is perfectly well, & does not bite anybody once in a month. I imitate George Selwyn about Mimy,[2] & do not try to convert him, but let him go to Mass every Sunday. Perhaps that may not be a great merit in France. Perhaps it is a greater merit here.

Old Lord George Cavendish comes into Parliament again in the room of his nephew, Lord Richard, to prevent a contest in Derbyshire. Ld. Richard, I suppose you know, left what money he had to his sister.

[1] Mrs. Walpole (afterwards Lady Orford) had been married in the previous July.

[2] Mimy, or rather Mie Mie, was the pet name given by George Selwyn to his adopted daughter, Maria Fagniani, afterwards Marchioness of Hertford.

Lord De Spencer & Ld. Falmouth are past recovery. Ld. Aylesford marries Miss Thynne, or rather her Father, for I fancy Bacchus will be better served than Venus.[1]

Adieu! my dear Sir. Do not write but when you like it: I shall have the pleasure of hearing of you from yr Son, & in the present situation of things, our correspondence is too much genée to afford us much satisfaction.

À Monsieur.
Monsieur Thomas Walpole.

No. 19.

Strawberry Hill: September 6, 1782.

My dear Sir,—Tho' I shall lose your Company, which I expected again with great pleasure, I must not lament your journey to Paris, as it will make your father & sisters so happy. Whenever you can make me amends, be assured I shall always be very thankfull, and that you have no

[1] The fourth Lord Aylesford married Miss Thynne, a daughter of Lord Weymouth (afterwards Bath), in November 1781. As she had twelve children, Horace Walpole's prediction cannot have come wholly true.

friend who more cordially wishes you well. I wish I had more power of showing you my regard. But tho' it is a barren friendship, it is a very sincere one, & not offered but to the very few whom I love & esteem.

I will trouble you with no Commissions, but to tell your Father how happy I shou'd be to see *him* again, & how much I value *you*: & to beg you to bring me the residue of the Voiage de la Grêce that is published, the continuation of the Bibliothèque des Romans, & one cup, or a cup & China of the Seve [*sic*] China, in imitation of Lapis Lazuli.

I was in town on Wednesday for one night, & shou'd certainly have contrived to see you if I had known of yr going so soon, but I only found yr letter here at my return. If you see poor Wiart, pray tell him how well Tonton is, & what care I take of him.

Yrs most affectly,

Hor. Walpole.

To Thomas Walpole, Esq.
in Lincoln's Inn, London.

No. 20.

Strawberry Hill: July 23, 1783.

I am much obliged to you, dear Sir, for your goodness to Madame de la Villebogue, of which she has herself told me too: She says she is trying to make interest in the way you recommended to her. I am extremely concerned that it is totally out of my power to return your kindness; nor did I want the addition of gratitude to excite me to serve you or any child of yours. Your son Thomas will have explained to you that is not even in General Conway's power to replace your son[1] yet, as he wou'd have been happy to do when he knew it wou'd so much oblige me; but the late Regulations of the Army have not left it at his disposition. Shou'd I by any unexpected chance be able to be useful to my Cousin Thomas, I shall seize it eagerly. He has every quality of head and heart that can endear him to me. But I am so useless & of so little consequence to Ministers that

[1] I presume this refers to Mr. Walpole's son, Lambert, who was afterwards killed in the Irish Rebellion.

it is not very likely; nor are there many from whom I wou'd ask a favour.

Your Son & I have been together at Lord Dacre's, where I assure you he is a great favourite. Next week I hope to see him here.

I believe your political prospectus was a very just one; but I now live so much out of the world, & in so narrow a circle, that I am entirely ignorant both of what is going on, & of what is to be done. I have, you know, a very high opinion of Mr. Fox's abilities, & believe him much more capable than any man of restoring this country to some credit. But I know various reasons, & you can guess them, why he may not have it in his power. Conjectures on futurity are very idle. For sagacity, I pretend to none, nor much depend on it in those that have most—for this reason: the wisest penetration does not condescend to calculate the thousand foolish reasons that weigh in, & determine, political events. It may know what ought to be the consequence of such or such measures; but the collateral decisions of chance or absurdity produce

such rubs or give [such] a wrong bias that a Foreseer is seldom a true prophet.

It wou'd be still more idle in me, whose life is drawn to the dregs, to busy myself with speculations or future scenes, of which I shall probably have but a glimpse. There is little merit in loving one's country or wishing its prosperity, for it is as natural as to love Individuals. But, when one totters on the verge of quitting it, the passion is weakened by its extensiveness. One regards the state of one's Country always with some reference to Self, to one's posterity, one's family, or one's friends. When one is to bid it Adieu, one wishes one's Country may be happy while these connections shall last, & by the preference for what one has loved, one wishes one's country may always be prosperous. But that *Always* is so vague & indefinite a desire, the impossibility of any one country always prospering is so certain, that, however fervent Father Paul's ejaculation Esto perpetua ! might be at the moment of utterance, he would not have found that it had much meaning if he had analysed it.

When one wishes what is impossible, there is more piety than sense in the effusion.

Having lived so long & seen so much, I cou'd still with more facility moralise backwards than forwards. But you & I, dear Sir, have so many parallel reasons for making many of the same reflections, that I shou'd be only wording your own thoughts. Besides, I am writing a Letter & not a Dissertation. And yet, perhaps, one who has been a silent Spectator of the *whole* change of scene, cou'd suggest many observations, that have not been made by the Actors, nor by those who have come upon the Stage in the middle of the drama, & will still less occur to posterity. But you, tho' much younger, have seen almost all that has operated our present situation. I say *almost*, because I throw the date farther back than most men, & shou'd make some stare who are little aware of what I mean. Yet you, I believe, want no key to my hypothesis.

I do not pretend to send you news. At present I actually have none. Your Son is, I believe, a most punctual correspondent; and, as I have the satisfaction of seeing him

often, he very seldom but knows whatever I happen to know. Nor will I make professions to you. They wou'd probably be vain as to effects; & of their sincerity in intention, I trust you have no doubt. What then remains but to repeat that I am

Most cordially yours,

H. W.

Aug. 7th.—This letter has been written this fortnight, as you will perceive; but I waited for yr. son to send it to you. He has now been here for two or three days, but leaves me to-morrow to my concern. I wish I could make such a dull life as mine more entertaining to him. I do think it great condescension when he gives any time to such an antiquated relation.

No. 21.

Berkeley Square: January 3, 1784.

I have received yr letter, dear Sir, & the four bibliothèques, which since I have so many I wish to continue, tho' so many are most indifferent; & I will pay your Son. I

am very happy to have contributed in any degree to his Establishment;[1] & I may agree with you in rejoicing that he will be removed from the disagreeable scenes here. This last Revolution[2] was the wildest & most indigested scheme possible; for, tho' long premeditated by, I believe, the *sole author*,[3] no preparatory measures had been taken, nor scarce anybody consulted till very few days before the execution: the definitive [*sic*] resolution having been taken probably from the very *local* unpopularity of the India Bill with the persons interested here in town, & here only. The consequence is that, rebuffed in all decent offers, so contemptible & ridiculous a set have been picked up, that they wou'd be laughed out again had they any real strength. But you will see by the list how very slender a portion of abilities lies amongst them. Do but think of the two Ambassadors![4] Nor have they acquired one Convert, nor

[1] As Minister at Munich.

[2] The fall of the Coalition Government.

[3] The King.

[4] The Duke of Dorset was made Ambassador at Paris, and Lord Chesterfield Ambassador at Madrid.

made even an inconsiderable breach yet in the House of Commons. In short, this system can only last ten days more. What will happen next, I do not pretend to guess —perhaps what the Person guessed who was asked about a certain road.

Such are the present consequences of that absurd rogue Lord Sh[elburne's] finesses! They soon blew up himself— no great harm. But he drew others after him, who are more to be lamented, & who will get into almost inextricable difficulties. Ld. T[emple] one of his dupes, & not much more estimable, has already made a preposterous figure; and all their manœuvres together have compacted a body together that possesses almost all the abilities of this Country. And you may guess what will be the success of Rashness founded on Weakness![1]

I shou'd write a history not a letter were I to repeat half the extravagancies of the last three weeks. Some indeed are too

[1] This is a singular forecast. Rashness, founded on Weakness, produced as a matter of fact the strongest and most enduring Government since that of Sir R. Walpole.

strong to be trusted to paper! It is my opinion that the accomplices, or accessories, will be frightened & desert. I know that They who used to move the occasional puppets *are* alarmed.

I am glad of the Dss. of Choiseul's recovery. In my own particular, indeed, I have no great reason to interest myself about her, or the Abbé Barthélemi; for, tho' out of civility to you, dear Sir, he may enquire after me, I have little opinion of his, or the Duchess', regard for me. Tho' they both *seized* their letters, before I cou'd have any notice, yet—as I had ordered them to be restored without being acquainted with that proceeding—they, at least, owed me either an excuse or thanks. I never received a word from either. In the Abbé it was impertinence; a great Lady cannot be in the wrong, tho' she had professed so much friendship for me, & still more for my late dear friend. Indeed, the treatment I received from all concerned in her papers, has given me no high opinion of French honour or French friendship. I shou'd blush if my conduct had not been

the very reverse. And, had they any delicacy, it wou'd have taught them how to act.

Mr. White, who brings you this, is a bookseller with whom yr Son is well acquainted. He goes to purchase books at the Duc de la Valière's sale. I have given him some Commissions at a very high rate, & yet do not expect, indeed almost hope not, to obtain the articles, especially as I have never seen them, & may be much disappointed when I do. But, as the occasion is unique, & as I shou'd be vexed not to have bought them, shou'd the articles I wish for go cheap, I have run the risk, tho' contrary to my late rule, for I reckon everything much dearer now, as I have so little time left to enjoy what I purchase.[1] I will be obliged to you if you cou'd give Mr. White any assistance in my commission. The Duke of Bedford's book I do not expect to get. The one I wish for most you will know by the largeness of my Commission.

[1] Horace Walpole, three days later, changed his mind, and cancelled these commissions. I do not print his short letter doing so, as it contains no other matter of interest.

I have long thought of writing a life of René of Anjou, Father of our Margaret (tho' I probably shall not now). And, as he was a royal Painter as well as Royal Author, I am doubly interested about him, tho' I have very few *Royal* passions! And they do not increase.

I forgot to tell you that I do not believe that Parliament will be dissolved—not from scruples about promises, but as it wou'd produce infinite mischiefs at present, & probably not mend the matter by a re-election: and, if it did not, the Recoil wou'd be tremendous! In short, I hope and believe that this interlude will prove to have been only a very silly one.

Yrs most cordially,

H. W.

No. 22.

Berkeley Square: Feb. 1, 1784.

I am much obliged to you, dear Sir, for two parcels of bibliothèques, & for your very sensible & judicious letter of Jan. 16, which came in one of them. Your reasoning on poor Lord C[amden] & on our

situation is perfectly just. The former has certainly been swayed against his own opinion by his son, & has betrayed a want of firmness, which I have more than once perceived in his character. If charters can authorise the most shocking inhumanities that ever were exercised, not excepting those in Peru and Mexico; so far from being sacred, they wd be the most execrable instruments imaginable; & Lord C[amden][1] wou'd be better founded in maintaining the Charter of the Inquisition, which has to this day scarce murdered so many thousands, as were swept away at once by the monopoly of rice and betel in India. Mr. Burke's speech on Mr. Fox's Bill, which he has published, & which makes no impression here, touches on many other of our dreadfull excesses, & will no doubt make us the horror of Europe, as we are of the Eastern World. Mr. Fox felt, & had genius enough to have put a stop to, & corrected, these crying grievances, and consequently

[1] I imagine that this refers to the speech which Lord Camden made in the House of Lords on December 17, 1783, on the India Bill of the Coalition Ministry. *Parl. Register*, vol. xiv. p. 101.

has been rendered odious by the interested Villains of the Company, and by the tools of Mr. Hastings; and is proscribed, litterally [*sic*] & personally by the Father of his people [the King], who became popular the moment he had *outdone his former outdoings*.

But France is going to, as you say, and no doubt will, punish our abominations—nay, I shall not be surprised if the present inundation of zeal shou'd ensure punishment to this country itself, & its posterity, & should think the sacrifice of our liberties not too great a compliment in return for the dismission of the Coalition. The Church, the old women and the Country gentlemen (who, as I have often heard you say justly, wou'd like Despotism, provided they cou'd be assured of a low land tax, a good price for Corn, and the Game Act) are all running headlong to support good King Charles the First; & the immaculate Master Billy has already taken a giant's step toward imitation of Lord Strafford: yet, finding that the torrent of words which he inherited cannot combat Mr. Fox's invincible powers of reasoning, and that equivocation was still

less a match for them, he has prudently adopted an arrogant sullenness, & litterally finds that contemptuous silence will govern the House of Commons better than paying court to them. Indeed he does not omit more solid methods. *Three* Scotch Dukes[1] were yesterday made Peers of England to purchase only *four* votes for to-morrow! You will say 'a very dear bargain indeed!' & will perhaps conclude that there is a little want of Specie, when paper & parchment are substituted at such high rates. It may be so; but at least it shows how large the object is, & how desperate the resolution of not being foiled!

It is true that, on the other hand, there is all the good sense of both Houses of Parliament—excepting the Chancellor, Lord Gower, Pepper Arden, the Duke of Richmond, & the premature Boy's parts, such as they are. Nothing is so despicable as the rest of the Administration, of which you have a sample before your eyes.[2] Nay,

[1] In June 1784 the Duke of Gordon was made an English peer: the other two appointments do not seem to have been made. See the P.S. to the letter.

[2] In the Duke of Dorset as Minister at Paris.

in those I have quoted, I do not believe you will discover much of solid abilities. There is not the least knowledge of the World in any but the second [Lord Gower], and he knows nothing else. Nor has he or the Chancellor any true courage—the latter a real bully. The Duke [of Richmond] has just that sort of Spirit that involves him in scrapes with more facility than it extricates him. On his being enrolled of the Cabinet a few days ago, G. Selwyn, tho' of the same side, said 'Why, it is turning a Monkey into a China-shop, to break everything to pieces.'

Upon the whole, the best that I expect is that there will be a strong, manly opposition remaining (if they are beaten to-morrow, as I apprehend,[1] or as I conclude they will be soon), who will be able to prevent some mischief, & may, as happened at last in the American War, force (in concert with the blunders & misfortunes that will be committed) the Nation to open its unwilling

[1] Mr. Coke moved, on February 2, 1784, 'that the continuance of the present Ministry in power is an obstacle to a firm, efficient, extended and united administration,' and the motion was carried by 223 votes to 204. *Parl. Register*, vol. xiii. pp. 50–61.

eyes. But that time I probably shall not live to see. Nor will it avail when it comes. We shall be undone before that Moment arrives! Mr. Fox, the only man upon Earth who cou'd have restored us to any tolerable state, & who has displayed as consummate temper as genius, is not allowed to save us while the opportunity was within our reach.

You are very obliging in offering to execute Commissions for me: but, excepting the bibliothèques & the Voiage de Grèce, I will not trouble you. I must be more œconomic now than formerly. I have lost 1,400*l*. a year by my Brother's death,[1] the foresight of which made me recall my Commissions at the Duc de la Valière's sale. My place at the Exchequer is much sunk too, by our Reforms & the Peace—& what worse may happen, who can tell? All I do know is that, having kept myself (without ambitious views) as incorrupt as the *immaculate* idol of the moment [Mr. Pitt], I will not disgrace the small remains of life. I do not mean that a high price would be

[1] Sir Edward Walpole, Sir Robert's second son, died on January 11, 1784.

offered for so insignificant [a] man as I am. But, when such a dumb beggar as Mr. Carteret,[1] & such a poltroon as his brother Weymouth, are thought worth a second peerage, who needs despair that wished to sell himself? I do feel your position sensibly: & it is one of the few points which wou'd make me desire what I never shall have: power, that I might be usefull to you & your family. In fact, I question whether any man will long have opportunities of serving any Body. No; the French do not overrate our folly; it is *au comble*! it is as great as they cou'd wish! & Mr. Pitt's ambition lending itself to the ——'s views [*i.e.* the King's views], will revenge France for the mortifications which she received from his Father Chatham.

3*rd*.—The three Scotch Baronies are now denied; yet I don't quite disbelieve at least two of them. Mr. Fox last night recovered a majority of nineteen, & has by his temper & address gained several of *the*

[1] Mr. Carteret was made Lord Carteret with remainder to the second and other sons of Lord Weymouth on Jan. 31, 1784.

Country Gentlemen from Mr. Pitt. Yet we are far from any settlement, but expect further obstinacy from *the Park* [St. James], & hostile counter-resolutions from the Lords. Yr Son, whom I expect every minute, as he talked of setting out to-morrow,[1] must explain details, for which I have not time. Adieu! dear Sir. You may guess more easily than I can describe our situation. Even private life is grown unpleasant from the violent divisions sown in Families, Friendships, Connections—in that art we have an able Master.

No. 23.

Strawberry Hill: Dec. 2, 1784.

I was a little surprised, I confess, dear Sir, at not hearing a word from you since your arrival in Germany, not even to tell me how you liked your situation. I was more surprised when your cousin told me you did not know whether you *might* write to me. That sounded a strange expression to so near a relation, to one who flattered himself

[1] I.e. for his post at Munich.

that he had always shown the warmest disposition to be your friend, to one with whom you had corresponded familiarly, & to one who is a most insignificant old man, & who can have no pretensions to respect, unless from the trist [*sic*] precedence of old age. I am no Aulic Counsellor, & have not a quarter in my Coat of Arms more than you. But there is an end of Etiquette; my answer to your cousin showed my perfect good humour; we will never say a word more on the Subject, but write, as we used to do, when we have anything to say.

That condition indeed seems to admit of difficulties. I have been here these six months in utter ignorance, living in a small neighbourhood, composed chiefly of gossiping old women, to whom I do not listen, & seeing neither politicians nor fashionable people, so I neither know what passes in the grave world or in the gay one. The Duchess of Gloucester tells me that my letters are composed of nothing but excuses for having nothing to tell her. She & you shou'd recollect that Sixty-seven is no very amusing age.

I am sorry that your time at a very different period is not better diverted. Not being very diplomatic, I am ashamed I know nothing of your Elector, but the good you tell me of him. But I will consult Lady Mary Coke, who is better acquainted than the Herald's Office with Europe vivante et mourante. I shou'd think you might ask leave to make little jaunts to different Courts. You are not likely, I trust, to be employed in hiring Mercenaries. At least, you have an Auctioneer[1] in the neighbourhood, who, tho' bidding less, may leave you no business of that sort. As one, at least, of his aquiline beaks is always prowling for prey, our coffee-houses are in expectation of hearing he has begun his breakfast. Lord George Gordon would fain go fowling against him.[2] But, as his Lordship's sole skill lies in raising a conflagration, I imagine an inundation will be more serviceable.

[1] The Emperor of Germany.

[2] In November 1784 Lord G. Gordon 'told Pitt that he had received offers from several hundred seamen to serve against the Emperor. Pitt warned him that he was acting without authority.'—See *Dict. of National Biography*.

If you make any tours, your pencil will add to yr pleasure. If you wou'd send me a slight drawing of your Elector, I shou'd be glad. Keep a journal of all you hear & see. I speak very disinterestedly, God knows. But, if you live, as I hope you will, to my age, it will be a kind of recall of youth, & bring back a thousand passages you wou'd else forget, but be glad to remember. Your Brother's Company, which I am glad you have, tho' sorry he has leisure to give it, wou'd make little jaunts doubly agreeable.

Pray don't give yourself any particular trouble about the amber box. Tho' in my second childhood, I am no longer very eager about toys, with which I have little time left to play. I am in no haste, & whenever the box comes, I shall be equally obliged to you.

This letter wou'd have set out sooner, but you are in one respect so little yet of a Minister in a German Court, that you had omitted all dates of place & time, & I was forced to write to yr cousin for a direction. Or perhaps, tho' so old fashioned

myself, our Maccaronic omission of all useless usages may have penetrated into the Holy Roman Empire. I dare not send my Compliments to your Brother, lest it shou'd look formal to remember anybody. And this shall be the last time I will make a ceremonious conclusion to my letter, if Ratisbon has adopted the contrary practice. Till you tell me so, I will beg leave to be, dear Sir,

Yrs most affectly,
HOR. WALPOLE.

A Monsieur.
Monsieur Thomas Walpole,
Ministre Plénipotentiaire
de Sa Majesté Britannique
P. Ostende. à Munich.

No. 24.

Berkeley Square: Feb. 19, 1785.

Dear Sir,—I have been so very ill for near three months, that I cou'd neither answer your former letter, nor that which I had the pleasure of receiving by your brother: as I begged him to tell you, I have yet but one hand quite free, which will

prevent my saying much as I write uneasily. I give you many thanks for the drawing [1]—it is an amiable countenance.

Were I to talk of what is uppermost in my thoughts, it wou'd be of the severity of the weather, which checks my recovery. I call it *the year of Forty Winters.* The snow first appeared on the first of October, a circumstance that in my long life I never knew before. Every day almost, since, has been remarkable for two or three changes, all bad. But I do not imagine that you want a Diary of the Weather. Topics there are, at last, of various sorts, but rather subjects of discussion than Events, & consequently not easily detailed, were I able. The chief themes are India, Ireland, & the Westminster Scrutiny. I understand nothing of the two former, & Elections I never in my life wou'd attend to, having no notion of loading my head with what I shou'd certainly mean to forget the moment the business was over.

The Gay World has its affairs too as well

[1] Evidently the drawing of the Elector which Horace Walpole had asked for in the preceding letter.

as the Grave: but I have still less to do, if possible, with what the young are doing, than with settling what is to be, when I shall be gone! I will only tell you what I cannot avoid hearing, that the Prince of Wales had given to him, & gave, five balls running last week; & it was still said that there was to be a sixth, or *Tontine*, to consist of those that shou'd survive from the five preceding.

Poor Lady Strafford[1] is dead after nine weeks of dreadful sufferings from falling into the fire in a fit; and the old Lady Gower is probably dead by this time by a similar accident: that is, by setting her gown in flames.[2]

Lord Graham's intended match with Lady Jemima Ashburnham is declared.[3] It makes my poor old friends, the Duke & Duchess of Montrose, very happy.

Your brother will probably pick up more news for you. The Duc de Chartres is

[1] Lady Strafford, the daughter of the Duke of Argyll, died on February 9, 1785.

[2] This lady, the third wife of the 1st Earl Gower, died on February 12, 1785, before the date of this letter.

[3] Lord Graham, the only son of the 2nd Duke of Montrose, married Lady Jemima Ashburnham on February 22, 1785.

again here, which may furnish some which I am not likely to know, but told with twenty lies by the Newspapers.

Ten days ago there was a report that your Emperor was beseiging Maestricht; but it is not believed. We had just been believing that he was exchanging countries, & like ancient Cæsars conferring new Crowns.[1]

I must now rest; I am forced to begin my letter d'avance, or I cannot be sure my hand will hold out, if I wait for the post day. So I have two days in bank before my letter will set out.

Sunday night, 21*st*.—Lady Gower is dead & puts 132 persons into close mourning: some indeed will only wear black strings to their corals. The Duchess of Devonshire is once more breeding.

22*nd*.—My letter must set out without any more provender in its knapsack. The town, I hear, seems to be expecting some crisis: but prognostics do not always prove

[1] The Emperor wanted the Elector of Bavaria to give up Bavaria to him in exchange for the Austrian Netherlands, to be constituted a kingdom under the title Austrasia. *Ann. Reg.* 1784, Hist. p. 125.

prophecies—at least the wisest prophets make sure of the event first, & I will imitate them.

If your Elector becomes king of *Austrasia*, as foreign letters announce, you will at least approach nearer home. I hope he will, like the Popes, take a new name, too, & call himself *Childebert* or *Clotaire*. I shall feel at home too, when such titles are revived. They will accord with *my* old love. Adieu, Dear Sir,

Yrs Most Cordially,
H. W.

A Monsieur.
Monsieur Thomas Walpole,
Ministre Plénipotentiaire
de Sa Majesté Britannique,
à Munich.

No. 25.

Strawberry Hill: April 8, 1786.

I am much obliged to you, dear Sir, for your congratulation on Lady Horatia's marriage.[1] It makes me very happy indeed

[1] Lady Horatia Waldegrave, whose mother, afterwards Duchess of Gloucester, was the illegitimate daughter of Sir Edward Walpole, married Lord Hugh Seymour.

as she has found one of the most amiable men in England, & of a character the most universally esteemed. This wedding, & consequential visits, have taken me up a good deal for the last three weeks; before which time I was not able to answer your former letter. For three months I had not the use of either hand, &, tho' I had one very short interval, I soon relapsed, & was again confined to my house. I cou'd not much lament my confinement, for the Winter has been insufferably bad; &, if it is gone, no symptoms of Spring are come in its room. I wou'd say less of gout & weather if I had anything more amusing to tell you. I believe the letters of your sisters do not overflow with events. We have even been forced to live on the rebound of Stories of the Cardinal de Rohan, Caliostro [*sic*],[1] with some interludes furnished by Dr. Johnson's friends, who out of zeal have exposed the poor man, by relating

[1] My readers may recollect that the Cardinal de Rohan, Marie Antoinette's Almoner, was the agent employed in purchasing the celebrated diamond necklace for the Countess de la Motte. Cagliostro was the Italian adventurer whom the Countess accused of complicity in the affair.

all his absurdities & brutalities, more than they had blown up the bladder of his fame before.

I lost my old friend, & your late acquaintance, Lord Dacre, in January. He made a most reasonable will; & Lady Dacre has deserved it by her kindness to his children, who both live with her.

The Catalogue of the Duchess of Portland's collection is come out. The Auction begins on the 24th. Out of 38 days there are but 8 that exhibit anything but shells, ores, fossils, birds' eggs, & natural History. And in the eight days there are hundreds of old fashioned Snuffboxes that were her mother's, who wore three different every week;[1] & they probably will sell for little more than the weight of the Gold. I once asked the Duchess to let me see them; &, after two Drawersfull, I begged to see no more; they were so ugly. Madame de Luxembourg has as many, but much finer & [more] beautifull. The Hamilton Vase is

[1] Margaret, the wife of the second Duke of Portland, was the daughter and heiress of the second Earl of Oxford.

in the last day's sale.[1] It will not, I conclude, produce half of what it cost the Duchess unless it is sent for to the Houghton Collection in the North. The *Vendor* of the latter [Lord Orford][2] has been giving extravagant prices for Cipriani's trumpery drawings, who is dead: & the *purchaser* [Empress of Russia] has bespoken a large picture by Sir Joshua Reynolds. He was to chuse the subject, size and price. He told me he had pitched on the Infant Hercules & the Serpents. 'Lord! said I, people will say she is strangling the two Emperors.'

Monsr. Adhemar is returned to us, & Mlle. Deon[3] has been here all the winter, &

[1] The Hamilton vase—so-called from Sir William Hamilton—was purchased at the Duchess' sale by the then Duke of Portland, who deposited it on loan at the British Museum in 1810. It was smashed to pieces in 1845, but has been successfully repaired, and is still in the Museum.

[2] Lord Orford had sold the magnificent collection of Sir Robert Walpole's pictures at Houghton to the Empress of Russia.

[3] Le Chevalier d'Eon represented France in this country in 1763 till his supersession by the Count de Guerchy. On his return to France some years afterwards, he assumed, or was made to assume, a woman's dress; and he returned to England in 1785 as Mlle d'Eon. His sex remained doubtful till his death, in 1810. A full account of his extraordinary

much in request. I have met her twice, but wou'd not visit her out of regard to Madame de Guerchy. The Duc de Nivernois has made an incomparable translation of my history of Modern Gardening, as I suppose your sisters, to whom I gave one, have told you. My Strawberry Editions, merely from their scarcity, sell ridiculously dear. I was forced to pay thirteen guineas yesterday for the Anecdotes of Painting in England in quarto for the King of Poland, who had sent to me for them, & I had not a spare copy left. It is hard to pay almost treble the value for my own impressions! If Collectors are fools, it is a comfort, at least, that the works of great authors are common & cheap.

Lady Di (Beauclerc) has painted a new room at her Cottage, since you saw it, with small pictures of peasants & children, in rounds and squares, that are chained together by Wreaths of natural flowers that exceed her lilies, & all flowers that ever were painted. What pity that they are in water colours, &

career will be found in the *General Biographical Dict.* revised and enlarged by Alexander Chalmers.

consequently almost as perishable as their originals. Van Huysum's finical & elaborate works will pass for Standards, because Lady Di's bold characteristic touches will not exist! They are like the excellence of a great actor or musician, whose perfections live only in tradition, & cannot be compared with the merit of prior or subsequent performers. If the Apollo Belvedere were not extant, who wou'd believe that it has never been equalled?

I am sorry your residence is so unentertaining, but I rejoice that all around you is so tranquill. I hate the authors of big news, who precipitate the Bills of Mortality & rival a pestilence. It is better to be occupied about a Deon or a Cagliostro than about a hero.

Yrs Most Sincerely,
H. W.

A Monsieur.
Monsieur Thomas Walpole,
Ministre Plénipotentiaire
de Sa Majesté Britannique,
à la Cour de Munich.

No. 26.

Strawberry Hill: Oct. 25, 1786.

It wou'd be most unreasonble, dear Sir, if so superannuated a correspondent as I am shou'd expect you to write frequently to me. In Winter, the gout commonly prevents my using my fingers, as was the case of the two last; and, in Summer, I live here where I know nothing worth repeating, as the newspapers, which are not reserved, must have proved to you. They lie or blunder, but somehow or other

They catch the eel of *Science* by the tail.

You have had a material event in Germany, the death of the King of Prussia.[1] I do not perceive that it made much public sensation here, even amongst the pamphlet shops; not so much as Dr. Johnson's—but of him there is an end too. His devotees have convinced the public what fools they were for idolising him as they did. We have had a Slip of Germany here, that

[1] Frederick the Great died on August 17, 1786.

awakened some attention: the Archduke & his Wife.[1] But they are gone & forgotten too. In my own connections there has been an agreeable event; the Duke of Grafton has seen Lady Euston,[2] & treated her very kindly. She is, in return, going to make him a present of another grandchild, which is not the greatest desideratum in that Family. Some of your relations, I suppose, have told you that Dr. Hor. Hammond is dead. So no doubt you know is my good old friend & your acquaintance, Lord Dacre; & Princess Amelia[3] is not expected to live a week. Such are the events only with which I cou'd fill my letters, as they affect me, & reduce my very contracted circle, but are little interesting to you; & consequently I cou'd not expect that you shou'd draw upon me for such intelligence. Your Sisters, who write so

[1] Horace Walpole gave an account of the Archduke and Archduchess's visit to Strawberry Hill in a letter to Lady Ossory, dated September 28, 1786.

[2] Lady Euston was the daughter of Lord Waldegrave and his wife, Horace Walpole's niece, who, after her first husband's death, became Duchess of Gloucester.

[3] Princess Amelia, the favourite daughter of the King, lived till 1810.

well, have certainly supplied you better & with younger Intelligence.

I am much obliged to you for offering to trouble yourself with Commissions at Paris; but, if all my objects are narrowed here, they are almost totally so there. At most, I shall beg you just to inform yourself how many numbers of the Voiage Pittoresque de la Grêce have been published: &, when you arrive, I will trouble you to send for those I want, as I have received none a great while: and I will desire you to pay for what numbers I am indebted of the Bibliothèque des Romans, for which I will repay you. Shou'd you see Dr. Gem, might I ask you to inquire whether Mr. Selwyn has repaid him, as I desired, for les Mœurs des Francois. If not, shall I beg you to discharge that debt also?

Madame de Cambis is in England, but I have not yet seen her, but hope I shall. My good Duchess de la Valière I never can forget, & the old Maréchales & Madame de Jonsac, & I shou'd wish to be mentioned to if you see them. Of the last I have heard nothing a great while. The Duc de Niver-

nois has done me too much honour not to be sure how much I respect him.[1] Vanity never forgets obligations.

You will find Tonton in as good health & spirits as ever, & so entire a favourite that I doubt I cannot impute my fondness to gratitude too. I hope that he will show you that his memory is as perfect as his other perfections & that he is [as] much yours as Dear Sir,

Yr Affect humble Servt.
Hor. Walpole.

P.S.—Will you be so good as to inform yourself whether Beaumarchais' Edition of Voltaire is totally stopped?

No. 27.

Strawberry Hill: Dec. 9, 1787.

It was not at all extraordinary, dear Sr, that I shou'd tell your Daughters that I thought your marriage with Madame de Villegagnon very sensible. I have long had

[1] The Duc de Nivernois translated into French Horace Walpole's *Essay on Gardening*. *Vide supra*, Letter 25.

great respect & esteem for that Lady, & have no doubt but her virtues & understanding will make you very happy: & since you despair of returning to your own Country, so creditable a match in France seems a very wise measure, & the alliance will replace agreeably the Friends you have left in England. I shoud have been very glad if your affairs woud have allowed your bringing Madame Walpole over, & consequently, my making my court to her in person; but, tho I shoud hope the former may still happen, I am much too old to form any projects at all distant, & therefore must beg you, Sr. to offer my most respectfull compliments, & congratulations to Her.

I am exceedingly glad of peace: I always wish for it for the sake of others, & *now* very interestedly, as my late time of life makes me desirous of perfect tranquillity, & of not suffering uneasiness for any of my Friends, or on their account for their Friends.

Whether the treaty of commerce will be advantageous or the contrary, to this

Country, I do not pretend in the least to judge. You know, I think, how utterly ignorant I am of all matters of Trade. I may say truly, of anything usefull. I never had a head or an inclination for business, & have passed an idle life in amusing myself with trifles—nor do I regret my option. The Abilities, Integrity, & Temper of my Father seldom meet, & without them all, Ambition, I beleive, is no path to much felicity, or to solid Reputation.

I am not better acquainted with the present internal politics of France, with which I have had little or no correspondence since my dear Friend Madame du Deffand's death. I did cast my eye on M de Calonne's book, but not understanding the Finances or terms of Finance of France, I was little the wiser. The part I did understand, I admired very moderately. Eloquence has advanced with us to such masculine superiority, even in the youngest men, that studied flowers & affected Pathos, composed by the Pen, are in my eyes quite puerile. Calonne's apostrophe to the

Manes of his Father made me smile, instead of touching me ; & when I recollected the Anecdote of La Chalotais,[1] my smile was converted into an Emotion less tender.

For my own amusement I am sorry the Press of Paris is so barren of everything but politics, unless it were to send us more Figaros & Tarares ![2] Our own press produces full as little entertainment: we lived two years upon the Dotage of Dr. Johnson & his foolish Biographers. Yes, I have seen one French book, which I shoud be glad to have & cannot get, Monsr. D'Argerson's (I think it is called) Loisirs. There is much good sense in it, & many anecdotes ; & I do not dislike it for *not* resembling what he calls his model, Montaigne, who surfeits me with his own Vanity. I cannot conceive why Montaigne is so much admired, unless by People who woud like

[1] La Chalotais, partly through Calonne's treachery, was committed to the Châtau de Taureau, and condemned to death. There is a full account of the affair in one of Horace Walpole's letters to Miss Barry. Cunningham's Edition, vol. ix. p. 201.

[2] It is hardly necessary to say that Beaumarchais' *Le Mariage de Figaro* enjoyed wide popularity. His later *Tarare*, produced in 1787, is less well known.

to talk as much of themselves. Adieu! dear Sr

Your most obedient humble sert,

HOR. WALPOLE.

The Honble. Thomas Walpole.

No. 28.

Strawberry Hill: July 21, 1788.

Dear Sir,—I can but too easily excuse myself for being so irregular a correspondent, as I have had two fits of the gout since last Christmas; and, as my hands are always the most affected, it is no wonder that so old a man is willing to indulge them. I did, indeed, answer Lady Craven's last letter in November, tho' I have reason to think she did not receive it, as I have before heard she complained of me. It is very true that I have not been eager to revive that commerce, both from the lameness of my hands, & from my apprehension of her Ladyship's litterary activity, having no ambition to figure in Les Mémoires de l'Académie d'Anspach, of which she was pleased to enroll me. I am, moreover, of opinion that a Veteran Author ought to take

out his quietus as much as the Superannuated of any other Profession, & with so much more reason, as every man can be sure of having lost the use of his limbs, but is not so good a judge whether he has lost the use of his head or not.

I mightily approve Lady Craven's blending the Dairy with the Library as an example to her sex, who at present are furiously apt to abandon the Churn totally, like the abominable Milkwoman at Bristol, who has been so ungratefull & abusive to her kind benefactress, Miss Hannah More.[1] We have Hen Novellists & Poetesses in every parish, & Lady Craven might institute a whole academy of her own gender.

I am very glad, dear Sir, that your situation is improved: a more active & animated scene wou'd be certainly more amusing: but to be comfortable is the first step to amusement. You can, at least, make more frequent little excursions: &,

[1] Hannah More raised a large sum of money for the benefit of a Bristol milkwoman, who had published a volume of poetry. Probably wisely, Miss More retained the capital in her own hands, giving her instalments of it from time to time. But the milkwoman declared that her patroness was jealous of her, and forced her to give it up.

if little Courts are not interesting, their mimickry of grander follies is diverting & various—diverting to anybody but to their plundered subjects, who, even so, are lucky if they are not sold as Mercenaries!

I, you know, do not lament that your great neighbour makes so poor a figure in his campaign. His Female ally seems to be still more embarrassed. Her Memorial in answer to the Swedes is not at all in the Stout Semiramis style she had assumed.[1]

Our Summer, usually dull, is enlivened by the royal journey to Cheltenham, & another Westminster Election—at least the Newspapers are not reduced to mere invention & lies from Ireland; but, as those influences do not reach to Twickenham, my letter receives no aid: nor have we had any event, but a great Cricket Match at Hampton, which was interrupted by St. Swithin.

[1] In 1788 the Emperor of Germany and the Empress of Russia were engaged in a war against Turkey. On Sweden joining in the war the Russian Minister at Stockholm was directed to present a rescript, distinguishing between the Swedes and their Sovereign. See *Ann. Reg.*, 1788, Hist. p. 74.

Lord Frederic Cavendish has succeeded my poor old friend, the Duchess of Montrose, at Twickenham Park, but I much doubt whether he will reside there. The Duke of York has bought Oatlands for three & forty thousand pounds. My neighbour, Sir George Pococke, was much obliged by your civilities to his Son. What can I tell you more from hence? Why shou'd one write more than one has to say? Adieu! then, dear Sir, & be assured I am with great regard,

Yr Affect. & obed. humble Svt.

HOR. WALPOLE.

À Monsieur.
Monsieur Thomas Walpole,
à Munich.

No. 29.

April 9, 1790.

Dear Sir,—I was obliged to go out as I received yr obliging communication, which I now return with many thanks. The letter is uncommonly sensible, clear, & descriptive, & paints not only what is, but what certainly will happen—the last confusion. And, tho' the Nation does not yet seem to turn, I am persuaded that it will, as

soon as any considerable convulsion happens. And Commonsense tells me what numerous Thousands must be ready to join & promote a re-revolution. How that will terminate, no foresight can predict, much less in favour of whom. Not, I fear, of Liberty, for, however active Patriotism may be at the outset of Reformation, Self-Interest & Ambition are endowed with much more perseverance.

My poor lame fingers cannot well say more. They produce daily so much chalk that I cou'd write with it on black paper as easily as on White with Ink.

Yr much obliged humble Servt.

HOR. WALPOLE.

To
The Honble. Thomas Walpole.

No. 30.

Strawberry Hill: June 26, 1792.

I am much obliged to you, dear Sir, for the trouble you have taken to clear up the matter of Monsr. D'Ormesson's letter. You cannot wonder that I concluded it was not meant for me, when you find that it was to thank me for a present made to the Library

of the late King of France, six & twenty years ago! Was it possible for me to suppose that the present reigning Powers at Paris were busying themselves in paying debts of their quondam Monarchs? Indeed, they do pay them in their present coin, Paper! This reminiscence puts me in mind of Tiberius' answer to the Trojan Ambassadors who were sent to condole with him on the death of Augustus long after his exit. He condoled with them in return on the loss of so excellent a Citizen as Hector. If I live six and twenty years longer, & the House of Bourbon is re-established, I will send an answer to one of M. D'Ormesson's Successors.

To be sure I have been singularly circumstanced about presents of my Editions to Royal Personages! Never having been an officious Royalist, my offerings have always been sollicited, not obtruded. In 1766, the Royal Librarians desired to have my Editions for the Bibliothèque du Roi. On my return to England, I did send a set, complete to that æra, handsomely bound, as M. D'Ormesson testifies: & I did receive a letter of thanks—

from the Under Librarian—so M. d'Ormesson's is Supererogation of gratitude. I did imagine they might have given me a set of the Louvre prints of Louis Quatorze's Victories, palaces, &c., a common present for contributions to their Library, & I shou'd not have hagled [*sic*] about receiving a compliment from a crowned head, when the overture had issued thence. Some years afterwards, Count Potocki brought me a message from the present King of Poland, with whom I had been acquainted when he was in England, desiring my Anecdotes of Painting.[1] It distressed me, as they were out of print; & I had only my own set. In short I was reduced to buy a second-hand set (yet in good condition) &, tho' the original set sold for less than thirty shillings, I was forced to pay thirteen guineas from their scarcity. In return, I received a letter of thanks in his Majesty's own hand. If the Russians depose him, & destroy that really noble new Constitution, which I shall lament as much as I detest the French Anarchy, perhaps some Muscovite Librarian

[1] See *ante*, Letter 25, p. 94.

of Catherine Slaybear will a few years hence send me duplicate thanks.

My third royal tribute has been still less acknowledged. A Dane, or Islander, sent over hither to collect Books & MSS. for the Prince of Denmark, & for the illustration of their history, came to me, in the name of His Royal Highness, & requested my Editions, & offered me for them their splendid book of Shells (which, by the way, your Father, dear Sir, gave me many years ago). I said I did not sell my Editions: it wou'd be sufficient honour if his R. H. wou'd condescend to accept them. The Emissary then proposed Medals to me, or anything I shou'd like. I adhered to my refusal, & at last said earnestly, I did not sell books. A larger set I did send, as I had printed other Editions, & you may imagine splendidly bound. Several months afterwards the negotiator told me with some confusion that he had received a letter from the Danish Prime Minister, telling him that the Prince Royal wou'd write to me himself by the next post—which post is not yet come in, tho' due three years ago. I have

met the man several times since, who is always in confusion, & trying to make awkward apologies—whether really blushing for his principal, or for having played me a trick for himself, I know not. But, at last, I told him I desired to hear no more about the matter, and I do hope never to be honoured again with parallel commands, which have cost me much more than vain-glory is worth.

I thank you for your inquiries after my health. I am free from pain & content. I did not, at past seventy-four, expect to recover, I ought rather to say gain strength, of which mighty little ever was my lot. I still creep about as nimbly as a Tortoise, &, wishing to do nothing more than I do, my situation is comfortable enough: & I take care not to look forward, not only because there may be no *forward* for me, but because at my age alteration must be for the worse. I shou'd be still more in the wrong to trust to amendment from fine weather. If I turn to the left, I see my hay yonder soaking under the rain: & on the right I have a good fire. 'Tis pity we ever

imported from the continent ideas of summer. Nature gave us coal-mines in lieu of it, & beautifull verdure, which is inconsistent with it, so that an observation I made forty years ago is most true: that this country exhibits the most beautifull landscapes in the world, when they are framed & glazed; that is, when you look at them thro' the window.

With Lawsuits, I thank my stars & myself I am not disturbed. I gave up everything that I cou'd have contested; &, tho' a vast deal of the vast injustice I have suffered came from the suggestion of lawyers, who were malicious even out of their profession & without interest, I have not put it into their power to plague me by employing them. I am merely a peg, on which the issue of a lawsuit hangs; and, as I do not take part in it, it does not molest my tranquillity. I wish you as long & as quiet an old age, & anything you wish in the meantime.

I am, Dear Sir,
Your most Affect. humble Servt.
ORFORD.

P.S.—I am still in the Dark, & to guess who the Horace Walpole—homme agé—was who M. d'Ormesson says was frequently at the Royal Library, but has not been seen there for a whole year. It is most sure that an old Horace Walpole has not been there in seventeen years. And, if M. d'Ormesson can make an anachronism of 17 years, it is not so wonderfull that he shou'd thank me in 1791 for a present I made in 1766, & which was not made *progressivement* but at once. It is like one of the mad rants in Lee's plays, when a Lover begs the Gods to *annihilate time & space* that he & his Mistress may meet incontinently, at the expense only of many years & miles!

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